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HOUSEHOLD CALENDAR

Home Repairs - Now is the Time to Make Them.

A radio interview between Miss Ruth Van Deman, Bureau of Home Economics, and Mr. S. H. McCrory, Bureau of Agricultural Engineering, delivered in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, broadcast by a network or 48 associate NBC stations, Tuesday, April 26, 1932.

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MISS VAN DEMAN: How do you do, Everybody:

I wonder how many of you have been to see one of the Better Homes demonstration houses this week? Dr. James Ford, director of the Better Homes movement tells me that over 8,000 communities are putting on Better Homes Programs this year. If you have visited one of these houses, I am sure you looked at the kitchen with new interest after hearing Dr. Stanley's talk of last week. And by the way, we still have on hand a supply of the free bulletin on Convenient Kitchens. If you are rearranging your kitchen to make work easier, I believe the plans in this bulletin will help you.

Now today, Mr. S. H. McCrory, chief of the Bureau of Agricultural Engineering, is here ready to answer questions on Repairing the House. In these days when there is more surplus time than cash, it's well to catch up on small repairs. Also, keeping the house in repair helps to keep up the value of the property. Now, Mr. McCrory, how would you begin on this business of repairing a house?

MR. MCCRORY: Well, Miss Van Deman, first I'd go over the whole house, outside and inside, and jot down all the things that need to be done. Start at the roof and look for missing or broken shingles or slates. Then look at the metal flashings around the chimney and other places on the roof. See if they need to be replaced or repainted. These metal flashings, you know, are what keep the rain from dripping down between the roof and the chimney.

Next, the chimney itself. Examine the top for loose bricks, and look at the joints to see whether the mortar is holding. Open joints should be re-pointed. Keeping the chimney in good condition is one way to cut down fire risks.

Snow and ice during the winter often damage gutters and down spouts. So look at these while you're on the roof, to find out whether they have been torn loose or the seams have been opened. While you are there clean out the leaves and trash.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Yes, summer rains will soon be coming and we all know how leaves clog the down spouts. Well, that finishes the roof, doesn't it Mr. McCrory? What's next?

MR. MCCRORY: Let's look at the sides of the house next. There may be some loose siding to tighten, and windows and doors probably need attention. As I've gone around the country recently, I've noticed a great many broken window panes. More than I ever saw before. If they are not replaced soon, much damage is apt to be done to walls and floors.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Mr. McCrory, while you are on the subject of doors and windows,

what about screens?

MR. McCrory: Yes, screens always need a thorough overhauling in the spring. Rusted out screen wire should be replaced, loose moldings tacked down, and the frames repainted. You can save much work on screens by using copper, bronze, or other long-lived wire. Also, look out for sagging doors. A little tightening a diagonal stay if needed, oil on hinges, locks, and closing devices, makes them work quietly and smoothly.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Yes, there's nothing that gets on the family nerves more than a screen door that sags and creaks. Now, how about porches, front and back?

MR. McCrory: Well, first look for rotten boards in the floor and steps. Porches are so exposed that they often need repairs sooner than the rest of the house. Examine the stringers and treads to make sure they are in good condition. And maybe the porch floor needs a new coat of paint. If the porch roof is metal, its life depends on keeping it well painted.

Now this is the way I suggest going over the whole house looking for minor repairs. If made in time they play an important part in keeping up property values.

Now, this spring, in many communities there's a movement on foot to repair and modernize old houses. Organizations are taking it up as a means of solving the unemployment problem. Muncie, Indiana, staged a very interesting demonstration of this kind last year, which in the end opened up a lot of new jobs. One house was modernized at a cost of \$1100 and 28 men were employed on the job. The idea spread all over the city and in a short time, 113 new pieces of work were reported. When the plan was started a thousand families were receiving aid, and in a few weeks this number had been reduced 60%. Other Indiana towns took up the Muncie plan and the Governor appointed a commission to help.

I believe this plan has possibilities in rural communities. Farmers who need repairs on their buildings might work out a plan to exchange farm produce for the labor of the carpenter, the painter, or the cement worker, whose help they need in making repairs about the farmstead. Such a plan will call for only a small cash outlay. Why not try it? The Department of Agriculture will help wherever it can.

We have a number of bulletins here in the Department free, for the asking. If you want information on plumbing repairs, painting, concrete, and building chimneys, write to us.

MISS VAN DEMAN: Thank you, Mr. McCrory, for all these excellent suggestions on keeping the house in repair.

Next week will be Child Health on the Household Calendar, and we're expecting a very distinguished speaker. Dr. Ray Lyman Wilbur will talk about the relation of child nutrition to child health, as shown by the findings of the White House Conference. Then Mrs. Carpenter will follow with some of her practical suggestions on food for children. Goodbye for this time!